

THE HONORABLE RONALD B. LEIGHTON

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT TACOMA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

TROY X. KELLEY,

Defendant.

Case No. 3:15-cr-05198-RBL

DEFENDANT'S RULE 29 MOTION
FOR ACQUITTAL FOLLOWING
DISCHARGE OF JURY

**NOTED FOR:
MONDAY, JUNE 20, 2016
(ORAL ARGUMENT REQUESTED)**

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 29, Defendant Troy Kelley moves for a judgment of acquittal on all remaining counts based on the insufficiency of the evidence. This brief specifically addresses Counts 1 and 6–10, 2, and 12.

Count 1 of the Superseding Indictment alleges that Troy Kelley failed to pay refunds owed to borrowers, and thereby possessed and concealed stolen money, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2315. That statute makes it a crime for anyone to knowingly possess or conceal money that was “stolen, unlawfully converted, or taken.” 18 U.S.C. § 2315. The Court instructed the jury that to find Mr. Kelley guilty, it would have to find that the government had proved that “the property did have an owner,” that Mr. Kelley “did not own it, and that he knew he did not.” Instruction No. 18. No rational juror could have concluded beyond a

1 reasonable doubt that Mr. Kelley took any property over which anyone other than himself had
2 an established ownership interest.

3 The evidence clearly showed that under the HUD-1s and escrow instructions—the
4 contracts between the homeowners and the title companies—the homeowners agreed to pay a
5 fee to Mr. Kelley’s company, PCD, in exchange for a service. Once closing occurred, the
6 homeowners had no further ownership interest in the fees. Because the borrowers
7 unconditionally agreed to pay the reconveyance fees to Mr. Kelley, his acceptance and
8 retention of those fees cannot be theft.

9 Second, the government compounded its deficient charges against Mr. Kelley by
10 tacking on five counts of money laundering predicated on mail and wire fraud, arguing that the
11 same conduct constituted both theft and fraud. But because the owner consented and was not
12 defrauded, and the title companies had no ownership interest in the fees, acquittal on Counts 6–
13 10 is required.

14 Third, Count 2 charges Mr. Kelley with making a false declaration in violation of 18
15 U.S.C. § 1623 based on two utterances of a statement—once in a deposition, then again in a
16 declaration. But the Supreme Court, in *Dunn v. United States*, 442 U.S. 100, 113 (1979),
17 definitively held that Section 1623 does not “encompass statements made in contexts less
18 formal than a deposition,” which has been specifically applied to preclude charges based on
19 declarations or affidavits. The declaration is therefore insufficient to sustain a conviction on
20 Count 2.

21 Finally, Mr. Kelley previously moved to dismiss Count 12, which alleged that he filed a
22 false tax return for United National in October 2008, on the grounds that the count was time-
23 barred. Dkt. No. 70. The basis for Mr. Kelley’s motion was simple: because United National
24 terminated by August 2008, its tax return was due four months later, in December 2008, and
25 the government’s indictment in April 2015 was not within the six-year statute of limitations.

1 *Id.* This Court deferred ruling on Mr. Kelley’s motion because “[t]he government . . .
2 presented preliminary evidence suggesting Kelley did not properly distribute the assets owed to
3 each partner, and so did not wind up United National by the date alleged.” Dkt. No. 105, p. 5.
4 The government has now had its opportunity to prove that United National was not properly
5 wound up and failed to do so. Acquittal on Count 12 is therefore required.

6 **II. DISCUSSION**

7 **A. Legal Standard.**

8 The Constitution “protects an accused against conviction except upon evidence that is
9 sufficient fairly to support a conclusion that every element of the crime has been established
10 beyond a reasonable doubt.” *Jackson v. Virginia*, 443 U.S. 307, 313–14 (1979). Accordingly,
11 “the prevailing criterion for judging motions for acquittal in federal criminal trials” is whether
12 “reasonable jurors must necessarily have [] a reasonable doubt as to guilt,” in which case the
13 judge “must require acquittal, because no other result is permissible within the fixed bounds of
14 jury consideration.” *Id.* at 318 n.11 (citation and internal quotation marks omitted).

15 Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 29(a) provides that a court “must enter a judgment
16 of acquittal of any offense for which the evidence is insufficient to sustain a conviction.” A
17 defendant may move for a judgment of acquittal following discharge of the jury; if the jury has
18 failed to return a verdict, the court may enter a judgment of acquittal. Fed. R. Crim. P.
19 29(c)(2). The court must grant acquittal if, after viewing the evidence in the light most
20 favorable to the government, no rational juror could have concluded beyond a reasonable doubt
21 that the evidence was sufficient to convict the defendant. *United States v. Katakis*, 800 F.3d
22 1017, 1023 (9th Cir. 2015); *United States v. Lopez*, 484 F.3d 1186, 1200–01 (9th Cir. 2007).
23 Evidence is insufficient to support a verdict where “mere speculation, rather than reasonable
24 inference, supports the government’s case, or where there is a total failure of proof of a
25

1 requisite element.” *Katakis*, 800 F.3d at 1023 (quoting *United States v. Nevils*, 598 F.3d 1158,
2 1167 (9th Cir. 2010) (en banc)).

3 **B. The Evidence Was Insufficient To Convict Mr. Kelley for Possession of Stolen**
4 **Property.**

5 **1. The Government Was Required to Prove Mr. Kelley Did Not Own the**
6 **Allegedly Stolen Property.**

7 To convict Mr. Kelley on Count 1, the jury was instructed that it would have to find
8 that the government had proved that “the property did have an owner,” that Mr. Kelley “did not
9 own it, and that he knew he did not.” Instruction No. 18. This is because “[s]tolen’ as used
10 in [the National Stolen Property Act (NSPA)] includes all felonious takings . . . with intent to
11 deprive the *owner* of the rights and benefits of *ownership*” *United States v. Turley*, 352
12 U.S. 407, 417 (1957) (emphasis added).¹

13 Crucially for this case, property transferred with the consent of the owner—or even a
14 mistaken belief that the owner consented—cannot be considered stolen. *United States v.*
15 *Bennett*, 665 F.2d 16, 22 (2d Cir. 1981) (“Because the concept of ‘stolen’ property requires an
16 interference with the property rights of its owner, property that has been transported, sold, or
17 otherwise disposed of, with the consent of the owner cannot be considered ‘stolen’ within the
18 meaning of ss 2312-2315.”). Nor is it theft for an owner, or someone at the owner’s direction,
19 to take property from someone else in possession of the property. In *United States v. Rogers*,
20 an airplane had been seized by the government and was in its possession and control. The
21 owner, or one of his compatriots, broke in and took equipment from the plane. The Tenth
22 Circuit held that the owner did not steal within the meaning of the NSPA. 786 F.2d 1000,
23 1003 (10th Cir. 1986) (“[The NSPA] should not be expanded at the government’s will beyond

24 ¹ See also *United States v. Long Cove Seafood, Inc.*, 582 F.2d 159 (2d Cir. 1978) (dismissing § 2314 charges
25 where the government could not prove ownership of the allegedly stolen goods because the National Stolen
Property Act covers only “felonious (taking[s]) with intent to deprive the owner of the rights and benefits of
ownership”) (quoting *United States v. Turley*, 352 U.S. 407, 417 (1957)); *United States v. Carman*, 577 F.2d 556,
565 (9th Cir. 1978) (property must be taken “from one having the attributes of an owner”).

1 the connotation—depriving an owner of its rights in property—conventionally called to
2 mind.”) (quoting *United States v. McClain*, 545 F.2d 988, 1002 (5th Cir. 1977)).

3 **2. A Rational Jury Could Not Have Found that Mr. Kelley Did Not Own the**
4 **Property.**

5 Based on the evidence presented at trial, rational jurors would necessarily have a
6 reasonable doubt as to Mr. Kelley’s guilt on Count 1. The evidence was overwhelming that the
7 owners of the money—the homeowners—consented to give it to Mr. Kelley. He therefore
8 could not have stolen it under *Bennett*.

9 The evidence at trial showed that homeowners entered into contracts with title
10 companies, agreeing to pay fees in exchange for services. Those agreements—called escrow
11 instructions—included HUD-1 Settlement Statements that specifically enumerated the fees to
12 be paid at closing, including the reconveyance fees paid to PCD, Mr. Kelley’s company. Exs.
13 A-106, A-108, 549, 564, 581. Defense expert Mark Schedler testified that whether something
14 is listed as a fee or a deposit on the HUD-1 tells you “who owns that money after closing. A
15 fee is owned by the recipient of the fee when it is paid. Now, there may be services owed, but
16 it is not the borrower’s money anymore.” Calfo Decl., Ex. A (Apr. 13, 2016, Trial Tr. at
17 33:23–35:2).

18 The reconveyance fee to PCD was not listed on the HUD-1 statements as estimated or
19 as a holdback; it was presented to the borrower as a flat fee. *See* Calfo Decl., Ex. B (Mar. 16,
20 2016, Trial Tr. at 85:14–21) (testimony of Julie Yates); *id.*, Ex. C (Mar. 23, 2016, Trial Tr. at
21 23:3–24:18) (testimony of Patty LeVeck); Ex. A-108. Mr. Schedler testified that in this
22 situation, where the HUD-1 lists a “reconveyance fee to the Post Closing Department,” “it is
23 being paid to the Post Closing Department, and it will be the Post Closing Department’s money
24 when it is paid.” Calfo Decl., Ex. A (Apr. 13, 2016, Trial Tr. at 39:23–40:10).

25 Another defense expert, Jim Savitt, gave his opinion that as a matter of contract law,
upon disbursement of the fees to PCD, the homeowners had no ownership interest in the funds.

1 He based this opinion on the escrow instructions and HUD-1s as well as statements made by
2 Old Republic and Fidelity in the class actions. He noted that nothing in the escrow instructions
3 referred to a continuing ownership interest or a trust account. He also pointed to Fidelity's
4 position that there was no obligation to return the fees, which Fidelity could not have said if the
5 homeowners retained an ownership interest.

6 The evidence was also clear that homeowners were not lied to and that the fee was
7 disclosed to them. On HUD-1 statements, homeowners typically signed underneath a
8 statement providing in part, "I have carefully reviewed the HUD-1 Settlement Statement and to
9 the best of my knowledge and belief, it is a true and accurate statement of all receipts and
10 disbursements made on my account or by me in this transaction." *See, e.g.*, Ex. A-106. Patty
11 LeVeck of Old Republic and Scott Smith, Old Republic's lawyer, both testified that
12 reconveyance fees were plainly disclosed to the homeowners, who agreed to pay them. Calfo
13 Decl., Ex. C (Mar. 23, 2016, Trial Tr. at 27:1–6); *id.*, Ex. D (Mar. 29, 2016, Trial Tr. at 56:21–
14 59:5). In the prior class action litigation, the title companies repeatedly argued that the full
15 reconveyance fees were disclosed; the federal courts dismissing those cases adopted the title
16 companies' reasoning. *See McFerrin v. Old Republic Title, Ltd.*, No. C08-5309BHS, 2009 WL
17 2045212, at *2 (W.D. Wash. July 9, 2009) (Ex. A-800) ("The HUD-1 document disclosed a
18 \$300 reduction in the amount due to Plaintiffs because of a 'reconveyance fee to The Post
19 Closing Dept.'"); *Cornelius v. Fid. Nat. Title Co. of Washington*, No. C08-754MJP, 2010 WL
20 1406333, at *2 (W.D. Wash. Apr. 1, 2010) (Ex. 703) ("Each of the Plaintiffs signed one of
21 these documents; each HUD-1 disclosed an escrow closing fee and a separate reconveyance
22 fee payable to PCD."). Homeowners themselves, including Scott Whitmarsh and James
23 Eckrich, testified in the government's case that they were never cheated or lied to.

24 Nor was there evidence that homeowners did not get the service they paid for.
25 Contrary to the government's implication that PCD was like a courier service that took money

1 and “just abscond[ed] with it, never having intended to deliver anything,” Calfo Decl., Ex. A
2 (Apr. 13, 2016, Trial Tr. at 80:15–22) (cross-examination of Mark Schedler), the evidence was
3 undisputed that PCD in fact performed the service it was paid to do. Each of the homeowner
4 witnesses testified that their reconveyance had been completed as promised. As Patty LeVeck
5 testified, homeowners received a valuable service in exchange for the fee they paid to PCD.
6 Calfo Decl., Ex. C (Mar. 23, 2016, Trial Tr. at 32:12–18). This was consistent with the
7 positions taken by the title companies in the class actions: “PCD performed a service to earn
8 the \$135 fee,” and “while Plaintiffs [i.e., Fidelity’s customers] paid a fee to PCD, they received
9 a service in exchange and thus were not harmed.” Calfo Decl., Ex. E (Mar. 24, 2016, Trial Tr.
10 at 47:18–48:3, 59:4–7) (testimony of Fidelity’s attorney, Erica Calderas); Ex. A-705, p. 8
11 (Fidelity’s Motion for Summary Judgment in *Cornelius v. Fidelity*); Ex. A-704, p. 9 (Fidelity’s
12 Reply in Support of Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings in *Cornelius v. Fidelity*). The
13 possibility that homeowners could have received the same service for a lower price does not
14 mean that the higher price was theft. The homeowners were not defrauded into consenting to
15 the transfer of the money; they received the benefit of their bargain.²

16 The evidence showed that the reconveyance fees were properly disclosed to the
17 homeowners, that the homeowners consented to pay the fee to PCD, and that the homeowners
18 got the benefit of their bargain by receiving a service from PCD. When the owners of the
19 money—the homeowners—consented to pay it to Mr. Kelley at closing, they ceased to own it.

20 ² The evidence was also insufficient to show that the title companies owned the money. Both Fidelity and Old
21 Republic denied that they had *any* right to the money they gave Mr. Kelley from escrow. Julie Yates of Fidelity
22 testified that it was the homeowner’s money being paid to PCD, not Fidelity’s:

23 Q: It wasn’t Fidelity’s money, whether it was \$405 or it was \$15? It wasn’t Fidelity’s money, correct?
24 A: That’s correct. It was always the borrower’s money.

25 Calfo Decl., Ex. F (Mar. 17, 2016, Trial Tr. at 41:18–20). *See also id.*, Ex. G (Mar. 17, 2016, Trial Tr. at 83:23–
26 25) (testimony of Carl Lago of Old Republic that “it is not [Old Republic’s] money”); *id.*, Ex. C (Mar. 23, 2016,
27 Trial Tr. at 26:18–19) (testimony of Patty LeVeck of Old Republic that the money was not Old Republic’s
28 money); Ex. A-316 (Old Republic’s answers to requests for admission in *Old Republic v. Kelley*, disclaiming
29 ownership of the funds). The government itself acknowledged that the reconveyance fees were “originally the
30 borrowers’ money.” Calfo Decl., Ex. H (Apr. 20, 2016, Trial Tr. at 3:20–4:3) (government’s rebuttal).

1 The money therefore, as a matter of law, “cannot be considered ‘stolen.’” *Bennett*, 665 F.2d at
2 22. Because no rational juror could have concluded that the evidence was sufficient beyond a
3 reasonable doubt to find Mr. Kelley guilty on Count 1, *see Katakis*, 800 F.3d at 1023, acquittal
4 is required.

5 **3. The Evidence Was Insufficient To Convict Mr. Kelley for Money**
6 **Laundrying.**

7 Mr. Kelley was charged in Counts 6–10 with laundrying money that represented the
8 proceeds of mail or wire fraud. Under the instructions provided to the jury, the government
9 had to prove that Mr. Kelley committed mail or wire fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1341 or
10 1343 by “knowingly participat[ing] in or devis[ing] a scheme or plan to defraud, or a scheme
11 or plan for obtaining money or property by means of false or fraudulent pretenses,
12 representations, or promises.” Instruction No. 21.

13 The government based its fraud theory on the stolen property charge, arguing that the
14 two sets of charges were intertwined: “In this case the scheme to defraud or the false
15 statements are the same scheme alleged in Count 1.” Calfo Decl., Ex. I (Apr. 20, 2016, Trial
16 Tr. at 27:20–28:1) (government’s closing argument). Counts 6–10 therefore fall along with
17 Count 1.

18 A defendant may only be convicted of mail or wire fraud where he intended “to obtain
19 money or property *from the one who is deceived*.” *United States v. Lew*, 875 F.2d 219, 221
20 (9th Cir. 1989) (emphasis added). The government did not attempt to argue that Mr. Kelley
21 defrauded the homeowners; as explained above, the full reconveyance fee was disclosed to the
22 homeowners and they agreed to pay it. *See Bennett*, 665 F.2d at 22.

23 To prove that Mr. Kelley defrauded the title companies, the government had to prove
24 beyond a reasonable doubt that the title companies had an ownership interest in the property
25 they gave to Mr. Kelley. *See Cleveland v. United States*, 531 U.S. 12, 15 (2000) (“It does not
suffice, we clarify, that the object of the fraud may become property in the recipient’s hands;

1 for purposes of the mail fraud statute, the thing obtained must be property in the hands of the
2 victim.”); *McNally v. United States*, 483 U.S. 350, 358 n.8 (1987) (“[T]he mail fraud statute . .
3 . had its origin in the desire to protect individual property rights, and any benefit which the
4 Government derives from the statute must be limited to the Government’s interests as property
5 holder.”); *Hammerschmidt v. United States*, 265 U.S. 182, 188 (1924) (“[The] words ‘to
6 defraud’ . . . refer . . . to wronging one in his property rights by dishonest methods or
7 schemes.”); *United States v. Milwitt*, 475 F.3d 1150 (9th Cir. 2007) (reversing conviction for
8 bankruptcy fraud under 18 U.S.C. § 157 where the people who were deceived—the tenants on
9 whose behalf defendant filed sham bankruptcy petitions—were not the people whose property
10 rights were interfered with—the tenants’ landlords who were left unable to collect rent).

11 The government argued that the only persons to whom Mr. Kelley allegedly lied were
12 the title companies: Old Republic and Fidelity, even arguing in closing that “Mr. Kelley lied to
13 escrow companies to get them to give him millions of dollars of borrowers’ money.” Calfo
14 Decl., Ex. H (Apr. 20, 2016, Trial Tr., at 2:10–12) (government rebuttal). But the government
15 presented no evidence that the title companies had *any* property interest in the reconveyance
16 fees. Both Old Republic and Fidelity denied any ownership of the fees of which they were
17 allegedly defrauded; the owners themselves consented to the transfer of the funds. As with
18 Count 1, no rational juror could have concluded that the evidence was sufficient beyond a
19 reasonable doubt to find Mr. Kelley guilty. Mr. Kelley is entitled to acquittal on Counts 6–10.

20 **C. The False Declaration Alleged in Count 2 is Legally Insufficient to Sustain a**
21 **Conviction.**

22 Count 2 charges Mr. Kelley with making a false declaration in violation of 18 U.S.C.
23 § 1623 based on two utterances of a statement—once in a deposition, then again in a
24 declaration. But the government is not permitted to bring a false declaration charge under
25 18 U.S.C. § 1623 based on a declaration filed with a court. In *Dunn v. United States*, the
Supreme Court held unequivocally that Section 1623 does not “encompass statements made in

1 contexts less formal than a deposition.” 442 U.S. 100, 113 (1979). Whether a statement is
2 sufficiently formal under 18 U.S.C. § 1623 is a legal question and is appropriately decided on a
3 motion to dismiss. *United States v. Benevolence Int’l Found., Inc.*, No. 02 CR 414, 2002 WL
4 31050156, at *2 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 13, 2002).

5 Courts interpreting *Dunn* have routinely rejected false declaration charges premised on
6 statements made in sworn declarations or affidavits. *See, e.g., id.* at *7–8 (collecting cases and
7 dismissing indictment based on “out-of-court declarations made by [defendant’s CEO], signed
8 under penalty of perjury, and attached to memoranda filed by [defendant] in support of a
9 motion for a preliminary injunction in a civil case” because “*Dunn* makes clear that this was
10 not a context as formal as a deposition”); *United States v. Savoy*, 38 F. Supp. 2d 406, 411–12
11 (D. Md. 1998) (dismissing false declaration count based on affidavit of a witness submitted in
12 opposition to a motion for a protective order and injunctive relief); *United States v. Lamplugh*,
13 17 F. Supp. 2d 354, 357 (M.D. Pa. 1998) (“[T]he United States Supreme Court has
14 unequivocally stated that an individual may not be prosecuted under § 1623 for submission of
15 a false affidavit to a federal district court.”). Indeed, the Department of Justice’s own Criminal
16 Resource Manual understands *Dunn* the same way: “a false affidavit submitted to a Federal
17 court in support of a motion to dismiss [can] not be prosecuted under Section 1623 because the
18 affidavit lack[s] the formality required of court proceedings or depositions.” DOJ Criminal
19 Resource Manual § 1749 (Oct. 1997), *available at* [https://www.justice.gov/usam/criminal-](https://www.justice.gov/usam/criminal-resource-manual)
20 [resource-manual](https://www.justice.gov/usam/criminal-resource-manual).

21 Because the alleged false declaration was made in a written declaration in support of a
22 motion in a civil case, and not in a deposition or similarly formal setting that portion of Count
23 2 was insufficient as a matter of law. The Court should acquit Mr. Kelley.
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1 **D. Count 12 Is Time-Barred.**

2 Mr. Kelley was charged in Count 12 with filing a false Return of Partnership Income
3 for United National for the calendar year 2008, which he filed on October 9, 2008. SI ¶ 146.
4 The statute of limitations for such alleged violations is six years, and runs from the date the tax
5 return is filed or the date it is due, whichever is later. 26 U.S.C. § 6513(c)(1); *United States v.*
6 *Habig*, 390 U.S. 222, 225 (1968). The government returned its first indictment on April 15,
7 2015. While United National’s tax return would, under ordinary circumstances, have been due
8 on April 15, 2009 (within the statute of limitations), 26 C.F.R. 1.6031(a)-1(e)(2), United
9 National terminated its partnership on August 11, 2008, making its tax return due on December
10 15, 2008—outside the statute of limitations. *Id.* Count 12 is therefore time-barred.

11 Because the statute of limitations is an affirmative defense, Mr. Kelley bore the initial
12 burden of proof. *Smith v. United States*, 133 S. Ct. 714, 720 (2013). But once Mr. Kelley
13 made a *prima facie* case that Count 12 was barred by the statute of limitations, the burden
14 shifted to the government to rebut his affirmative defense. *See United States v. Lothian*, 976
15 F.2d 1257, 1261 (9th Cir. 1992) (“[B]ecause due process requires that the government prove
16 each element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt, once the defendant introduces
17 sufficient evidence to make a *prima facie* case of withdrawal, the burden shifts to the
18 government to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant did not withdraw.”); *United*
19 *States v. Ingman*, 426 F.2d 973, 976 (9th Cir. 1970) (same regarding affirmative defense of
20 insanity).

21 A partnership terminates for tax purposes when all “operations of the partnership are
22 discontinued and no part of any business, financial operation, or venture of the partnership
23 continues to be carried on by any of its partners in a partnership.” 26 C.F.R. § 1.708-
24 1(b)(1). It is undisputed and indisputable that by August 11, 2008, at the latest, United
25 National had discontinued its operations and distributed all of its assets to its partners. *See*

1 Dkt. No. 87, p. 1; Superseding Indictment ¶¶ 65, 70 (alleging distribution of assets and
2 discontinuation of business, respectively); Ex. 2009 (United National's 2008 tax return). Mr.
3 Kelley thus presented a *prima facie* case that United National terminated by August 11, 2008,
4 and that its 2008 tax return was therefore due more than six years before the government
5 brought its indictment. *See generally* Dkt. Nos. 70, 87.

6 The government sought to rebut this *prima facie* case by arguing that United National's
7 affairs were not properly wound up and thus that United National was not (ever) terminated for
8 federal tax purposes. The government's argument relies on its assumption that United
9 National's assets were not distributed to its partners in strict accordance with those partners'
10 ownership percentages. As a factual matter, this argument was undermined by the
11 government's own tax expert, Paul Shipley, who testified that Mr. Kelley could not take
12 business expenses because the business was terminated, stating: "Well, he filed the final return
13 for United National. I don't know – That sounds like a termination of the business." Calfo
14 Decl., Ex. J (Apr. 12, 2016, Trial Tr. at 50:25–51:6). In the tax return to which Mr. Shipley
15 was referring, Exhibit 2009, Mr. Kelley had indicated that the Schedule K-1 for each of the
16 partners was the "Final K-1" and that the ending share of profit, loss, and capital for the limited
17 partners was 0%, suggesting that it was in fact properly wound up.

18 More fundamentally, though, the government's argument fails as a legal matter.
19 Whether United National's assets were distributed in accordance with the partners' ownership
20 percentages does not affect whether it was properly wound up. Dissolving partnerships are not
21 required to distribute their assets based solely on ownership percentages. "For Federal tax
22 purposes, Congress has given the partners of a partnership broad authority to negotiate the
23 terms of their business relationship, including the terms governing their business's formation,
24 operation, and dissolution, so as to achieve simplicity, flexibility, and equity as between the
25 partners." *Harbor Cove Marina Partners Partnership v. Comm'r of Internal Revenue*, 123

1 T.C. 64, 84 (2004); *see also Kresser v. Comm’r of Internal Revenue*, 54 T.C. 1621, 1630–31
2 (1970) (“[P]artners may readjust their respective partnership shares of income and . . . effect
3 will be given to the partners’ agreement and their modifications thereof.”). Given this
4 flexibility, the fact that the vast majority of the partnership assets were transferred to United
5 National’s general partner Blackstone—rather than to the partners according to their respective
6 original ownership percentages—can only be deemed improper winding up for tax purposes if
7 it was not “in accordance with the partnership agreement.” *Harbor Cove*, 123 T.C. at 84.

8 The government did not present any evidence showing that United National’s
9 dissolution was inconsistent with its partnership agreement. The government did not even
10 introduce United National’s agreement into evidence. The government did not introduce any
11 subsequent agreements between its members concerning distribution of assets upon
12 dissolution. The government did not introduce any evidence that any partner objected to how
13 United National distributed its assets and did not present testimony from any of the partners in
14 United National suggesting that they did not receive their agreed-upon share. *Compare*
15 *Harbor Cove*, 123 T.C. at 83 (holding that a partnership was not properly wound up for tax
16 purposes where a minority partner was “legitimately challenging the procedures used by the
17 managing general partner in winding up the partnership’s business” and the “lawsuit could
18 reasonably lead to [the partnership’s] reporting in a subsequent year of significant income,
19 credit, gain, loss, or deduction.”).

20 In short, the government did not introduce any evidence to rebut Mr. Kelley’s *prima*
21 *facie* case that United National terminated at the latest by August 2008 and that the statute of
22 limitations had therefore run. The evidence was insufficient to sustain a conviction, and
23 acquittal on Count 12 is required.
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III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Mr. Kelley respectfully requests that the Court enter a judgment of acquittal on all remaining counts.

DATED this 24th day of May, 2016.

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